

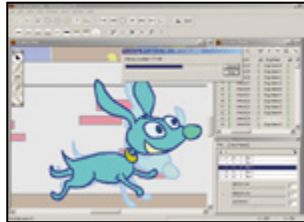
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 Once a year
 When a virus gets publicity
 Once a month
 Don't use it
 Daily

Software

Graphics

Toon Boom Studio

This review is taken from the December 2001 issue.
All details correct at time of publication

**Price** £240.00**Contact** +1 514 278 8666**Website** www.toonboomstudio.com

If you appreciate Flash movies (for example, you have a broadband internet connection) and can see a future for the medium beyond the ubiquitous 'skip our naff intro' efforts, then Toon Boom Studio may well appeal.

Ignoring the language of vector graphics, keyframe rotation and editing velocity function curves, it's essentially a specialist tool that turns drawings and images into full-motion, professional-quality animations. Export your work as a Shockwave or QuickTime file and you're ready for the web.

Although many a paper and pen still-frame animator or cartoon doodler may balk at the idea of drawing with a mouse and animating with buttons and menu commands (particularly when asked to shell out £240), the learning curve isn't as steep as it might seem. The emphasis is firmly on freeing the artist's creativity and sparing him the drudgery of frame-by-frame animation. It's all to do with multiple camera angles, 3D scene planning, automated lip synching and a hundred other aids, tools and shortcuts. Tempted? The developer has seen fit to offer a 30-day evaluation version of Toon Boom Studio on its website. You can also tune in to the discussion forum to see how beginners and experts alike rate the product.

If you're "a traditional animator branching out, an innovative web designer, or an adventurous content developer bent on pushing the envelope" (as the box says) – or if you like cartoons, have a powerful PC and some free time, the free download is the place to start.

By Kyle MacRae

System requirements

- 233MHz Pentium II or higher
- Windows 98/Me, 64MB RAM
- 100MB hard disk space
- monitor 1,024x768@24/32bit colour depth
- Price: \$349 (£240 approx)

Rating

Ease of use 7

Features 9

Value for money 8

Overall 8

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